



U.S. Department of Justice

*United States Attorney
District of New Hampshire*

*Federal Building
55 Pleasant Street, Room 312
Concord, New Hampshire 03301*

603/225-1552

MEDIA RELEASE

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Contact:

Thomas P. Colantuono
United States Attorney
Joseph N. Laplante
Assistant U.S. Attorney
(603) 225-1562 x 230

PROJECT SAFE NEIGHBORHOODS:

**ROCHESTER MAN CONVICTED ON FEDERAL
DRUG AND WEAPONS CHARGES**

Re: United States v. Leo PACHECO

CONCORD, NEW HAMPSHIRE -- United States Attorney Tom Colantuono and N.H. Drug Task Force Commander James Norris announced that Leo PACHECO, DOB 4/19/78, of Derry, New Hampshire was convicted on August 25, 2003 of federal drug and weapons charges.

PACHECO entered a guilty plea to an information charging him with possession with intent to distribute cocaine and being a felon in possession of a firearm. PACHECO, a previously convicted felon, sold cocaine to an undercover N.H. Drug Task Force detective in January, 2003, and was in possession of a loaded 9mm handgun when he was arrested on February 3, 2003. Convicted felons are prohibited from possessing ammunition (as well as firearms) under federal law.

PACHECO was detained without bail by U.S. District Judge Stephen J. McAuliffe pending his November 24, 2003 sentencing hearing at U.S. District Court in Concord. He faces a maximum term of imprisonment of 20 years.

U.S. Attorney Colantuono stated: "This case, against a convicted felon for illegally possessing ammunition and cocaine distribution, is precisely the type of prosecution for which the federal firearms laws and Project Safe Neighborhoods are intended. N.H. Attorney General Peter Heed's Drug Task Force is one of our most important partners in aggressively implementing Project Safe Neighborhoods in the District of New Hampshire."

The conviction, part of the Department of Justice's "Project Safe Neighborhoods" (PSN) initiative, resulted from an investigation conducted by the N.H. State Police Special Investigations Unit. The prosecution is being handled by Assistant United States Attorney Joseph N. Laplante, the Lead Attorney for the District of New Hampshire in the New England Organized Crime Drug Enforcement Task Force ("New England OCDEF").